

The Care Bears: "Try, Try Again!"



by Peggy Kahn

illustrated by Michael Fahrion

A Care Bear™ Book
from Random House

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Up in Care-a-Lot, their magical land above the clouds, the Care Bears were having a grand time sliding down rainbows and swinging on stars.

But some of the Bears were learning something new.



Champ Bear was showing them how to hit a baseball.

Friend Bear was catching and Cheer Bear was pitching.



“Keep your eye on the ball and swing!” said Champ Bear.



When it was Good Luck Bear's turn at bat, he sent the ball flying over a rainbow!

But Grumpy swung at three pitches without hitting a single one. "This is a dumb game!" he said, throwing down the bat.

"Try again," said Champ Bear, but Grumpy just kicked home plate and went off to his cloud to sulk.







Down on earth it was spring. Almost all the kids had baseball fever! After school they rushed off to practice with their teams.

There were eight teams in the Pee Wee League. In a few weeks they would start playing each other. Meanwhile, the kids on each team worked hard to become better ballplayers.



Tommy loved baseball, and he wanted to help his team win. But there didn't seem to be anything he could do well. When he was up at bat he swung with all his might but—swoosh!—all he ever hit was air!



When he tried to catch the ball, it hardly ever landed in his glove.



But the very worst part was running, especially running and sliding into a base.

"I can't!" said Tommy when the other kids tried to show him how.

“How will we ever win with Tommy the Tub on our team?” muttered Billy.







Up in Care-a-Lot the Bears were playing baseball every day, but Grumpy was still moping on his cloud.

"I wish you'd try again," said Wish Bear.
"You're missing so much fun. If you really watch the ball, I bet you can hit it!"



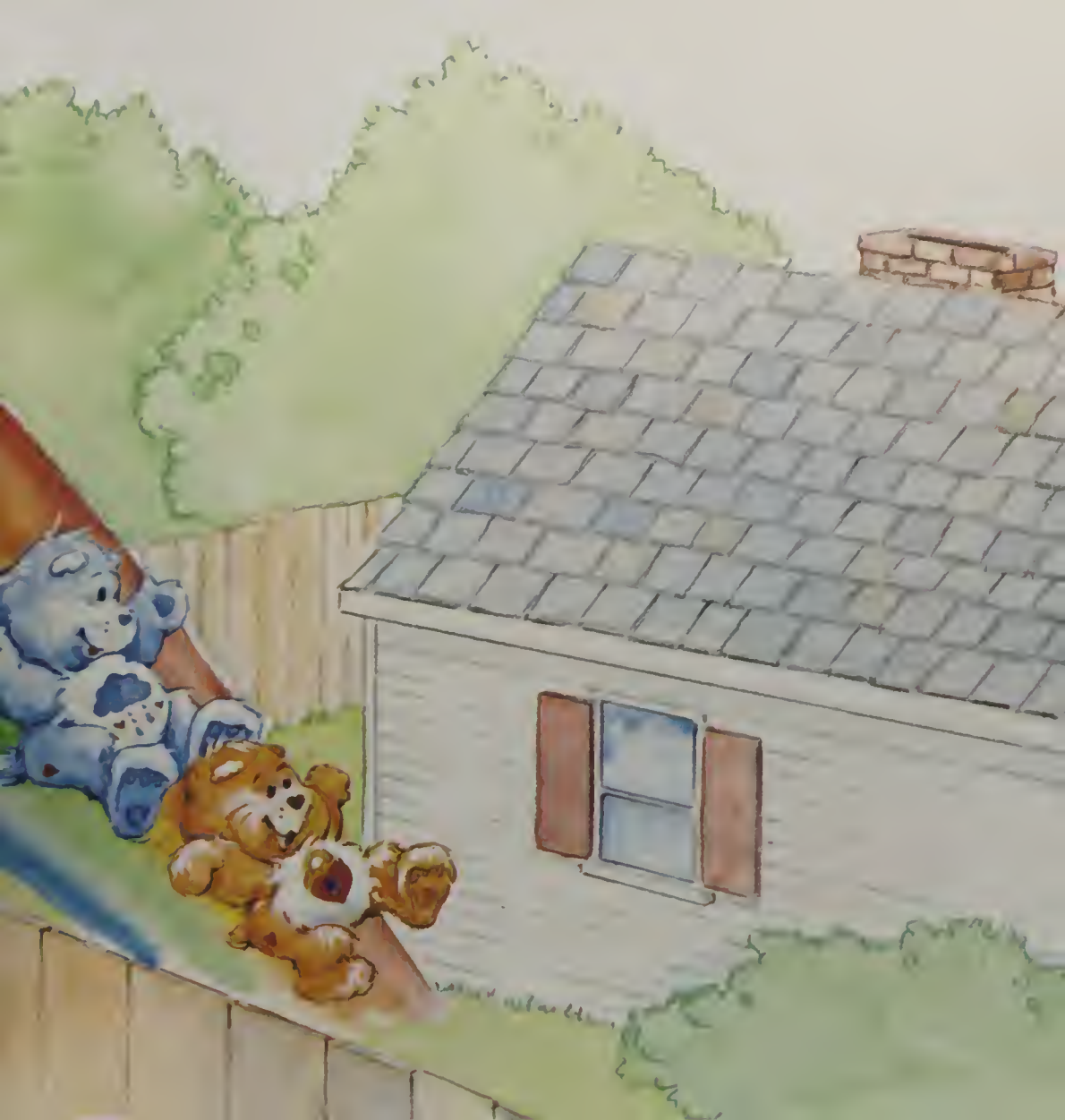
“I’m glad you’re being a good sport,” said Champ Bear. “Batter up!”
Whack! Grumpy hit the first pitch!

"I did it! I did it!" said Grumpy. Then he had a funny feeling in his tummy. "Uh-oh! I think someone down on earth is having trouble with baseball too!"





So Good Luck, Champ, Grumpy, and Secret Bear went down, down, down to earth—all the way to Tommy's house.





Tommy was sitting on his bed. He had almost finished a whole bag of cookies.

The Care Bears floated right into his room and explained who they were.

“You sure look sad!” said Grumpy.

“I am,” said Tommy. “I’m such a terrible baseball player that I’ve made up my mind to quit the team. I can’t do anything right!”

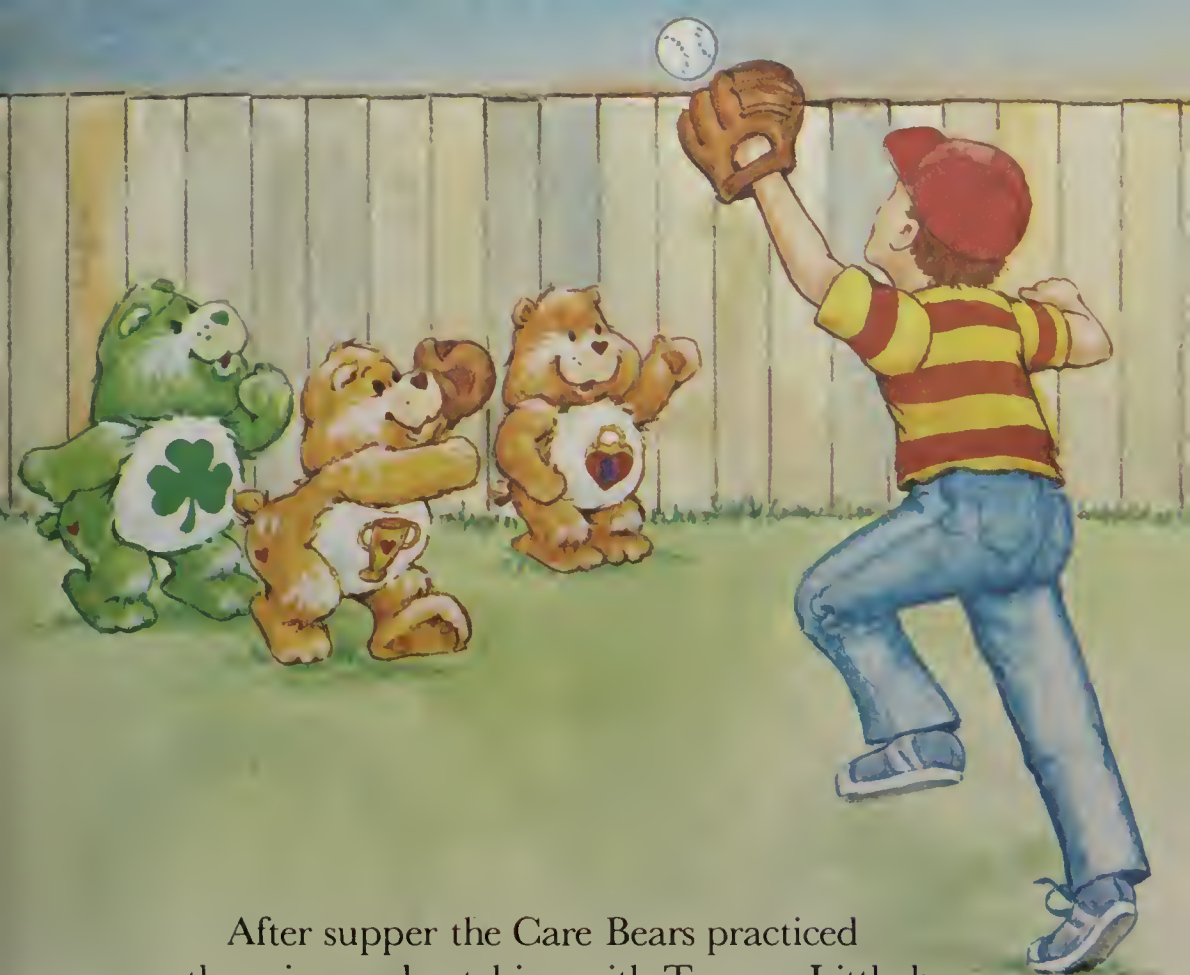
“I understand how you feel,” said Grumpy.

“But we’re going to help you,” said Champ Bear, “so don’t quit.”

“We’ll be your secret coaches,” said Secret Bear.



Early the next morning the Care Bears went jogging with Tommy before school. Because Care Bears are very special Bears, no one knew they were there but Tommy. The Bears showed Tommy how to lean forward and take longer strides.



After supper the Care Bears practiced throwing and catching with Tommy. Little by little, he started to improve.

“Learning to play ball is harder for some kids than for others,” said Champ.

“It sure is!” said Tommy.



Billy was surprised to find Secret Bear perched on the handlebars of his bike.

“I know someone who needs a pal,” said Secret Bear. “You could really help him and help your team at the same time.”

“Sure,” said Billy. But when he heard that the someone was Tommy, he shook his head.

“Tommy the Tub! He’s hopeless!”

“I’ll tell you a secret,” said the Bear. “Nobody is hopeless unless he or she thinks so. Give Tommy a chance!”



Billy thought about what Secret Bear had said. The next day in school he asked Tommy to eat lunch with him.

"Let's have a catch before the bell rings," said Tommy.



Billy groaned to himself, but he was amazed once they started to play. "You're turning into a powerhouse, Tommy!" he said. "Let's do this every day!"

Instead of gobbling down his lunch and buying candy, Tommy played ball with Billy. After school they went to practice together.



The first game of the season was just a few days off, and uniforms had been passed out. Tommy had slimmed down so much that his mom had to take in his pants so they wouldn't fall down.



That night, when the Care Bears visited, Tommy tried on his uniform.

“You sure look like a real ballplayer,” said Champ.

“I kind of feel like one too, thanks to the Care Bears,” said Tommy. “But I still can’t slide.”

“Just keep on trying,” said Secret Bear.

“You might surprise yourself,” added Good Luck.



At last the big day arrived. The bleachers were filled with fans, and the Care Bears were there too.

Before Tommy's team took the field, the coach told them to play their best but not to be sore losers. "And good luck!" he added.

Champ Bear and Good Luck agreed with him.





The teams were well matched and soon the score was even. Tommy had made a few good catches. At bat he struck out once and hit a single. The next time up, the pitcher walked Tommy and the next two batters. Then Billy hit a ball that skimmed past second base. Tommy started running. Before he knew it, he was sliding right into home, seconds before the ball landed in the catcher's mitt!

"I did it!" said Tommy.

"Yes, you did!" said Secret Bear.



Every kid is not a born athlete,
but hard work and friends
like the Care Bears
can make a big difference!



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